

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants thank Examiner Kelly for acknowledging their claim to foreign priority and for indicating that the priority documents have been received. Applicants also thank the Examiner for considering all the Information Disclosure Statements submitted to date. Thus, with the amendments and arguments presented herein, this case is now ready for allowance and issue.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The rejections are kindly traversed. Neither Sekidou et al. (U.S. 5,034,268) nor Bodager et al. (U.S. 6,197,409) disclose or suggest the present invention, either alone or in combination. The rejections are unsustainable, and Applicants kindly request that they be withdrawn.

Sekidou et al. do not teach the present invention. Sekidou et al. do not disclose or suggest the ink-receiving porous sheet required by the claims or its equivalent.

As indicated by the Examiner, Sekidou et al. disclose an offset blanket comprising, in lamination, a surface printing layer, a support layer, and a porous primer layer therebetween. Although the reference discloses (at great length) that the primer layer is porous, the reference does not disclose or even remotely suggest that the *surface printing layer* is porous. Indeed, the reference includes very little description of the surface printing layer, as seen below:

“The surface printing layer 2 is made of (a) plastic elastomer such as polyurethane, (b) rubber elastomer such as nitrile rubber, or (c) the like. The surface printing layer 2 is adapted to receiving printing inks carried on the offset lithographic plate, ... (column 2, lines 50-54).

The above discussion represents most of the description in the reference regarding the surface printing layer. Nowhere does the reference disclose or suggest that the surface

printing layer is porous. Merely because the surface layer may be made of an elastomer has no bearing on porosity. Accordingly, there is no basis to conclude that the claimed ink-receiving porous sheet and Sekidou et al.'s surface printing layer are equivalent. For at least this reason, the invention is not made obvious by Sekidou et al.

As recognized by the Office, Sekidou et al. does not disclose a release sheet. The Office asserts, however, that it would be obvious to add a release sheet in addition to the disclosed substrate to provide the capability of transferring the print media to another substrate. There is no basis in Sekidou et al. for such an assertion. Note the disclosure at column 1, line 56 to column 2, line 23 of the reference.

The Office relies on Bodager et al. to provide the release sheet, but this reliance appears to be misplaced. Bodager et al. relates to a completely different type of laminate media than Sekidou et al. In Bodager et al., the ink-receiving layer is an adhesive composition, in contrast to Sekidou et al. See, e.g., column 4, lines 30ff of Bodager et al. Whereas Sekidou et al.'s intermediate porous primer layer is porous, Bodager et al.'s intermediate water-absorbing layer is disclosed as "substantially solid" (column 2, lines 20-25). Whereas Bodager et al. discloses that a release layer is optional (column 3, lines 29-30), Sekidou et al. discloses controlling the diameters of the cells in the porous primer layer to achieve the desired peeling properties (column 3, lines 64-66). There is no motivation to combine these references, and there is no expectation of success if one were so motivated.

It is apparent that the porous sheet laminate of the present invention is entirely different from the ink-jet media disclosed in Bodager et al. because of the clear difference in the ink-receiving layer and the water-passing adhesive layer. As seen in the examples in the specification, and as described at pages 32 and 33 therein, the present invention enables a display sheet having excellent water resistance wherein the protective layer is inhibited from lifting or peeling off the printing layer, and desirably inhibits a water resistant display sheet

from lifting or peeling off an object as a result of water or water vapor penetration from the end face of the ink-receiving porous sheet. The porous sheet laminate as claimed is particularly suitable for a variety of printing and recording methods such as inkjet printing. Finally, the present invention avoids complicated and face-sealing treatments and therefore may be produced at a very low cost. The present invention is not obvious over the cited references, and the claims are patentable thereover.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The rejection of Claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraph is obviated by amendment. The claim now more clearly distinguishes the adhesive layer as comprising two adhesive layers and an interposing sheet having pores. This clearly supported in the specification as originally filed. See, e.g., page 14, lines 13-21 and Figure 2. The rejections should be withdrawn accordingly.

This application is now in condition for allowance, and an early notification of same is kindly requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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